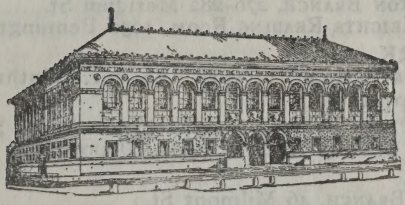
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THE BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

A CONDENSED GUIDE TO ITS USE



BOSTON
PUBLISHED BY THE TRUSTEES
1921

THE BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

CHARLES F. D. BELDEN, Librarian.

CENTRAL LIBRARY, COPLEY SQUARE.

BRANCH LIBRARIES AND READING ROOMS.

CITY PROPER.

NORTH END BRANCH, 3a North Bennet St.
SOUTH END BRANCH, 397 Shawmut Ave.
WEST END BRANCH, Cambridge, cor. Lynde St.
TYLER STREET READING ROOM, Tyler, cor. Oak St.

BRIGHTON.

BRIGHTON BRANCH, Academy Hill Road.
ALLSTON READING ROOM, 138 Brighton Ave.
FANEUIL READING ROOM, 100 Brooks St.

CHARLESTOWN.

CHARLESTOWN BRANCH, Monument Sq., cor. Monument Ave.

DORCHESTER.

CODMAN SQUARE BRANCH, Washington, cor. Norfolk St.
DORCHESTER BRANCH, Arcadia, cor. Adams St.
UPHAM'S CORNER BRANCH, Columbia Road, cor. Bird St.
LOWER MILLS READING ROOM, Washington, cor. Richmond St.
MATTAPAN READING ROOM, 7 Babson St.
MOUNT BOWDOIN READING ROOM, Washington, cor. Eldon St.
NEPONSET READING ROOM, 362 Neponset Ave.

EAST BOSTON.

EAST BOSTON BRANCH, 276–282 Meridian St.
ORIENT HEIGHTS READING ROOM, 1030 Bennington St.

HYDE PARK.

HYDE PARK BRANCH, Harvard Ave., cor. Winthrop St.

JAMAICA PLAIN.

JAMAICA PLAIN BRANCH, Sedgwick, cor. South St.
BOYLSTON STATION READING ROOM, Depot Sq.

ROXBURY.

ROXBURY BRANCH, 46 Milmont St.
WARREN STREET BRANCH, 392 Warren St.
MT. PLEASANT READING ROOM, Dudley, cor. Vine St.
PARKER HILL READING ROOM, 1518 Tremont St.
ROXBURY CROSSING READING ROOM, 208 Ruggles St.

SOUTH BOSTON.

SOUTH BOSTON BRANCH, 372 Broadway.
ANDREW SQUARE READING ROOM, 396 Dorchester St.
CITY POINT READING ROOM, Broadway, near H St.

WEST ROXBURY.

ROSLINDALE BRANCH, Washington, cor. Ashland St.
WEST ROXBURY BRANCH, Centre, near Mt. Vernon St.

THE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF THE CITY OF BOSTON: PRINTING DEPARTMENT.
MP6: 6.2.21: 3M.

THE BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY.

NOTE.— *Fuller information on most of the topics treated in this Guide will be found in other publications of the Library, to be obtained without charge on application at the Centre Desk in Bates Hall, at the Registration Desk, and at all Branches.*

LOCATION. The Public Library of the City of Boston comprises a Central Library in Copley Square, and thirty Branches and Reading Rooms in various parts of the city. A list of the latter, with locations, is printed on the opposite page.

CENTRAL LIBRARY. The Copley Square building has three floors, in which public departments are arranged as follows: *Street floor:* Open Shelf Room; Information Office; Government News Office; Newspaper Room; Periodical Rooms; Patent Department; Newspaper Files; Lavatories; Check Room. *Second* or *Main floor:* Delivery Room, for the issue and return of books; Bates Hall, the principal reading-room, with the main card catalogue; Registration Department, for issue of cards; Librarian's Office; Children's Department; Teachers' Reference Room; Lecture Hall; Statistical Department (entrance in rear of Court, street floor). *Third* or *Special Libraries floor:* Exhibition Room; Photograph Collection; Technology Reading Room; Fine Arts Reading Room; Music Library; Barton-Ticknor Library.

WORKS OF ART. The Central Library contains mural decorations by Puvis de Chavannes (Staircase Hall, second floor), Edwin A. Abbey (Delivery Room, second floor), John Elliott (Teachers' Reference Room, second floor), Joseph Lindon Smith (Venetian Lobby, second floor), and John S. Sargent (Sargent Hall, third floor). Among other important works of art in the building are the bronze doors, by Daniel Chester French (Main Entrance); the statue of Sir Henry Vane, by Frederick MacMonnies (Vestibule); and the marble lions, by Louis St. Gaudens (Main Staircase). For descriptions of the mural paintings, see the illustrated "Handbook of the Boston Public Library," for sale on the second floor, opposite the elevator, where photographs and postcards of the Library may also be obtained.

BRANCHES AND READING ROOMS. Each of these small libraries has its own collection of books and periodicals, and issues Library Cards, books, and photographs. Books from the Central Library may be applied for at any Branch, for delivery next day. Books drawn from the Central Library may be returned at a Branch; similarly, books drawn at a Branch may be returned at the Central Library or at another Branch. Procedure at the Branches is simpler than that at

the Central Library, with closer personal relations between attendants and public; but it follows the same lines, and uniform rules apply throughout the Library system.

Collections. The Public Library system contains about a million and a quarter volumes, of which about 900,000 are in the Central Library, and about 300,000 in the Branches and Reading Rooms. About 50,000 volumes are added yearly; deductions for various causes are such that the average net increase is about 25,000 volumes annually. In addition to books, the Library possesses over 50,000 photographs, about 8500 lantern slides, and many manuscripts.

Library Hours. Central Library: Winter, 9 a.m. to 10 p.m.; Summer (June 15 to September 15), 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Sundays and holidays, 12 m. to 10 p.m. (Sundays, June 15 to Sept. 15, 2 to 9 p.m.) The open hours at Branches are given in each Quarterly Bulletin; in general, Branches are open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., and Reading Rooms from 2 to 6 and 7 to 9 p.m.

Hall and Home Use of Books. The collections of the Library are for use both within Library buildings (Hall Use) and outside (Home Use). All material belonging to the Library is for the free Hall Use of all adult readers, irrespective of residence; most of the books may be drawn for Home Use by inhabitants of Boston.

Catalogues. Access to the books of the Library is obtained by means of the card catalogues, which are intended to be used freely by the public. The main catalogue is at the south end of Bates Hall; it is complete except for prose fiction in English, and for music and its literature. The fiction catalogue is in the Delivery Room; the catalogue of music is in the Music Room on the Special Libraries floor. The Library publishes for free distribution two Bulletins of new books, Weekly (on Saturday) and Quarterly. The former is an author list only; the latter is a "dictionary" catalogue with full subject-references, and class-lists of biography, essays, drama, fiction, music and poetry.

The Catalogue Card. The catalogue is composed of cards, each describing a book, and giving the call-number by which it may be obtained. For a full account of the method of getting a book with the help of the catalogue, see the pamphlet entitled "How to find and procure a book."

Arrangement of the Catalogue. The catalogue cards are arranged in drawers, in alphabetical order; the catalogue is of the "dictionary" type, with authors, subjects, and titles in a single alphabet. In case of any difficulty in finding a title in the card catalogue, an attendant should be consulted.

Call-slips. Books are obtained by use of call-slips, to be found at all desks in the Library, and on tables beside the card catalogues. The "Hall Use" slips are printed on gray paper (for Bates Hall; other colors for special departments); the "Home Use" slips are printed on manila paper (but slips for use with Special Cards are on pink paper).

To Get a Book for Hall Use. Look up the book in the card catalogue (see "How to find and procure a book"), seeking an attendant's aid if needed; write its call-number (printed at the right side of the catalogue card) on a Hall Use slip, opposite the word "Number"; if there is more than one volume, indicate which is wanted; below, write the author's name and a brief title; sign name and address at the bottom of the slip; write at the top the number of a seat in the reading-room, to be found on the edge of the table; and leave the slip at the desk. The book should be delivered at the reader's seat within fifteen minutes; if delayed longer, notification should be given at the desk. There is no limit to the number of books whch may be applied for at one time; make a separate slip for each book wanted, except in the case of volumes of sets. (On getting a book for Home Use, see page 5.)

Lettered Copies. Prefixed to the call-numbers of many books in the catalogue will be found a letter or letters; these are part of the number, and must be written with it. Z indicates that a book is in the Children's Room; C, that it is a Congressional document, to be consulted in the Statistical Department; N, that it is a bound newspaper, to be seen in the Patent Department; B.H., that it is on the open shelves in Bates Hall. All other letters, except B, show that the book is on the Special Libraries floor, and must be consulted there; this is true also of books marked "Cab." and "Map."

Books in Foreign Languages. Titles of books in various foreign languages will be found grouped together, either in the card catalogue or in special lists which have been issued in book form. For the latter consult an attendant.

Newspaper Files. The bound files of newspapers are to be consulted in the Patent Department. There is no full card catalogue of these newspapers; a complete finding list is kept in the Patent Department.

Medical Books. The Boston Public Library does not cover the field of medicine; most of its books and periodicals in this department have been transferred to the Boston Medical Library, 8 Fenway, where they may be used by the public between the hours of 9.30 a.m. and 6 p.m. (Saturday, 9.30 a.m. to 12 m.) The Library still purchases books on hygiene and nursing, but not on medicine, pharmacy, or dentistry.

Law Books. In the field of law, the collection of the Library is limited. The best public law library in Boston is in the State Library, on the third floor of the State House; hours, 9 to 5 daily, except Sunday (Saturday, 9 to 1).

Directories. The Library has a large collection of American city directories, for which application should be made in the Information Office.

Guide to Serial Publications. There is in preparation a co-operative list of periodicals, society transactions, etc., currently received by some sixty libraries in Boston and its

vicinity. The material for this list is at present kept in the Barton-Ticknor Library, where it is accessible to students. Persons engaged in research, who fail to find a periodical publication which they need, can usually learn where there is a copy by reference to this catalogue.

Open Shelves. The Open-Shelf Room on the street floor of the Library contains about 2500 classified volumes for circulation; these books are changed frequently, and are chosen with a view to their popular appeal. In Bates Hall and various other rooms of the Library, books for reference are assembled on open shelves; these may be used freely, without formality; the attendants will explain the arrangement. Books recently acquired are displayed in the Open-Shelf Room and in other departments of the Library. Recent fiction is kept on the open shelves in the Delivery Room. Books on important current topics may be found on shelves at the right of the Centre Desk in Bates Hall. All books in the Children's Room are on open shelves.

Library Cards. Cards permitting the holder to draw books for Home Use are issued without cost to residents of Boston, and to certain other classes of persons. Cards of residents are good for two years, at the end of which time they may be renewed. They enable adults to draw from the Library four books — two of which may be fiction — and children of reading age, but under sixteen years old, two books at a time, to be kept for two weeks. Cards are issued at the Registration Desk, and at all Branches; applicants for cards are required to sign the form provided for the purpose, giving a reference. For all matters connected with Library Cards and their use, see the pamphlet entitled "Rules and Regulations."

To Get a Book for Home Use. Look up the book in the card catalogue, and write its call-number in the column at the right side of the manila Home Use slip, making out as many slips as you desire books. Since a book specially wanted may not be available, it is wise to place the call-numbers of other books on each slip, as alternative choices. Write name and address on the slip, and hand it in with your Library Card at the window in the Delivery Room marked "Apply," or at the proper desk in other departments. Within ten minutes, the book should be brought from the stack, and the borrower notified by having his name called. If there is undue delay in the delivery of a book, the borrower is requested to give notice at the desk, that the cause of delay may be traced. A person who is repeatedly unsuccessful in securing a desired book may ask for a special search, using a form to be obtained at the Delivery Desk; if the book cannot be found, he may request the purchase of another copy. A reader who has obtained a book for hall use, and wishes to take it home, may have it charged on his Library Card at the desk in the reading room.

Returning a Book, Fines and Renewals. If it is not returned earlier, every book not issued under special conditions must be brought to the Library (or to one of its Branches) at the expiration of two weeks from the time it was borrowed, and left, with the Library Card, at the window marked "Return" in the Delivery Room. A fine is incurred by keeping a book beyond the period for which it was issued; willingness to pay the fine does not, however, authorize the borrower to retain a book indefinitely. Books not returned promptly are sent for at the borrower's expense. Books may not be renewed immediately on their return, nor are they held in reserve for applicants.

Restrictions on Borrowing. An asterisk (*) before the number of a book indicates that the book does not circulate freely for Home Use; many such books may, however, be taken out by special permission. If desirous of borrowing one of these books, consult the official in charge.

The Librarian's Office is reached through the Delivery Room, on the second floor; his office hours are from 9 to 5 daily, except Sunday.

Information on general subjects should be sought at the desks in Bates Hall; in certain fields expert assistance may be found in special departments (see below). On current topics, inquiry should be made in the Information Office.

Special Departments. Following is a brief indication of the scope of each:

Fine Arts Department (third floor.) Books in the fields of fine arts (architecture, painting, sculpture, etc.), industrial arts, applied sciences, and technology. Fine Arts periodicals. Collections of photographs and lantern slides, for study and for circulation. Special catalogues.

Music Room (third floor). Allen A. Brown reference collection of music and the literature of music. Large collection of music for home use. Musical and dramatic periodicals, indexes, scrap-books.

Barton-Ticknor Library (third floor). Special collections, restricted to use within the building: Shakespeareana, Americana, Spanish literature, Civil War material, dramatic history, maps, etc. Quiet reading-rooms, where students engaged in prolonged research may have books reserved.

Statistical Department (second floor; entrance in rear of court, street floor). Books and periodicals in the fields of finance, economics and statistics, and official publications of all countries. Special indexes and other helps.

Patent Department (street floor, rear of court). Complete files of patent specifications of the United States and other countries, with helps to their use. Here are kept also the bound files of newspapers.

Periodical Department (street floor). Current numbers of some 1400 periodicals, and 25,000 bound volumes of magazines. Full equipment of indexes as aids in reference work.

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Newspaper Room (street floor). Current newspapers from the leading cities of the world, including at least two from every State in the Union, and one from each foreign country. Back numbers are kept on file for a considerable period.

Children's Department (second floor). Books for young people, on open shelves. Pictures and magazines, and other material of interest to children. A weekly story-hour is conducted in the department.

Teachers' Reference Room (second floor, off Children's Room). Books and periodicals on pedagogy and allied subjects, and a reference collection of books of interest to parents and to teachers of all grades.

Information Office (street floor). Directories, guide-books, and other sources of quick information. Filing-cases with material on current topics. Vocational collection. House-organs of leading business organizations.

Open-Shelf Room (street floor). New non-fiction, and classified collection of interesting older books, for circulation.

Government News Office (street floor). The latest publications of the Federal Government, practically complete to date, arranged by departments and bureaus, with full indexes. Government periodicals.

Public Lectures. From October to April of each season, series of free lectures are held in the Lecture Hall on Thursday evenings at 8, and on Sunday afternoons at 3.30. Lists are published in the Quarterly Bulletins for September 30 and December 31. The entrance to the Lecture Hall is from Boylston Street; doors open at 1.30 and 6. The Lecture Hall is available under certain restrictions for public lectures and meetings of a popular educational character.

Public Telephones are in the street-floor corridor, at the right, near the Newspaper Room.

A Public Stenographer has her office on the street floor, near the elevator; she may be employed for copying any material in the Library.

A Check Room is maintained on the street floor, near the elevator, during the winter and in bad weather, for the convenience of the public. Safety requires that umbrellas and wraps be checked by visitors to the reading-rooms.

Photographic Copies of material in the Library may be arranged for through the Librarian's office.

Writing Materials are on sale at the Registration Desk.

Lost Articles may be reclaimed at the fiction desk in the Delivery Room.

Telephone Use. The Library telephone number is *Back Bay 8750* The public is invited to call on the Library for information on any reasonable subject; in most cases an answer can be given promptly. For telephones at Branches, consult telephone directory, under *Boston, City of: Library Department;* a list is also given in the Quarterly Bulletin of the Library.